

IN THE MATTER OF	*	BEFORE THE MARYLAND
DEREK C. BRIDGE	*	BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL
TRAINEE	*	COUNSELORS AND THERAPISTS
RESPONDENT	*	CASE NUMBER: 2012-65

* * * * *

FINAL ORDER TO RESCIND TRAINEE STATUS

The Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists (the "Board") y notified Derek C. Bridge, Trainee (the "Respondent") (D.O.B. 10/05/1989), that the oard intends to rescind his trainee status pursuant to the Maryland Professional Counselors and Therapists Act (the "Act") at Md. Code Ann., Health Occ. ("H.O.") §§ 17- 101, *et seq.* (2009 Repl. Vol., 2012 Supp.) Md. Regs. Code tit. 10 § 58.07, *et seq.* The pertinent provisions state:

H.O. § 17-406 Practicing without license or certification-Alcohol and drug counselors.

(b)(2) *Permitted under certain conditions-* An individual may practice alcohol and drug counseling without certification for a limited period of time, as determined by the Board, if the individual is working as a trainee under the supervision of an approved alcohol and drug supervisor while fulfilling the experiential or course of study requirements under § 17-302 of this title or § 17-402, § 17-403, or § 17-404 of this subtitle.

H.O. §17-205. Powers and duties.

(b) In addition to the duties set forth elsewhere in this title, the Board shall:

(3) Adopt a code of ethics that the Board considers to be appropriate and applicable to the counselors or therapists currently certified or licensed by the Board and the individuals currently working as trainees in accordance with § 17-406(b) of this title.

Code of Md. Regs tit. 10, § 58.03

.03 Professional Competence.

A. A counselor shall:

(1) Practice only within the boundaries of a counselor's competence, based on education, training, supervised experience, and professional credentials;

(2) When developing competence in a new service or technique, or both, engage in ongoing consultation with other counselors or relevant professionals and acquire appropriate additional education or training, or both, in the new area[.]

.04 Ethical Responsibility.

A. A counselor shall:

(11) Be familiar with and adhere to this chapter;

(14) Take reasonable precautions to protect clients from physical or psychological trauma.

B. A counselor may not:

(3) Enter into relationships that could compromise a counselor's objectivity or create a conflict of interest.

.05 The Counseling Relationship.

A. Client Welfare and Rights.

(2) A counselor may not:

(a) Place or participate in placing clients in positions that may result in damaging the interests and the welfare of clients, employees, employers, or the public;

(d) Foster dependent counseling relationships.

B. Dual Relationships.

(1) A counselor shall:

(a) Avoid dual relationships with clients [.]

.09 Sexual Misconduct.

C. Relationship with Former Clients.

(1) Except as set forth in §C(3) of this regulation, a counselor may not engage in sexual behavior with a former client.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Board finds that:

1. At all times relevant hereto, the Respondent was a Alcohol and Drug trainee (“AD trainee”) in the State of Maryland authorized, at the Board’s discretion, to practice alcohol and drug counseling, under the supervision of an approved alcohol and drug supervisor, while fulfilling the Act’s experiential or course of study requirements. Md. Code Ann., § H.O. 17-406(b)(2).
2. The Respondent was originally granted AD trainee status on or about March 27, 2012. The Respondent’s trainee status expires in or around March 2015.
3. At all times relevant hereto, the Respondent was practicing as an AD trainee at a health care facility (“Provider A”) located in Catonsville, Maryland.¹
4. In or around June 2012, the Board received a complaint from an employee of Provider A, stating that the Respondent was terminated for having an inappropriate relationship with a 19 year old female client (“Client A”).²
5. The Respondent worked at Provider A from July 2010 until June 2012.
6. While employed at Provider A, the Respondent conducted individual client evaluations, referred clients to Provider A’s inpatient facility, and held intensive outpatient group therapy sessions with clients. The Respondent performed these

¹ The name of Provider A has not been disclosed, in order to protect the Provider’s A’s identity.

² Provider A provides outpatient and residential treatment for individuals with problems involving substance abuse.

before and after he was authorized by the Board to work as an Alcohol and Drug Trainee.

7. In or around December 2011, Client A began outpatient counseling at Provider A. During this time period, Client A participated in group therapy sessions that were conducted by the Respondent.

8. In or around April 2012, Client A was discharged from Provider A.

9. In June 2012, Client A relapsed and was admitted into Provider A's residential facility. During her inpatient intake, Client A indicated that her relapse was caused by her relationship with the Respondent.

10. Client A also told employees of Provider A, that immediately before her April 2012 discharge from outpatient treatment, the Respondent approached her and asked her to go out with him. The Respondent also gave Client A his telephone number.

11. The Respondent and Client A talked on the telephone and met at a nearby shopping mall. The Respondent also picked up Client A from her residence and took her to the park or other places where he and Client A could talk.

12. Between April and June 12, 2012, the Respondent and Client A began having a sexual relationship. The sexual relationship sometimes took place at the Respondent's residence.

13. The Respondent and Client A also smoked marijuana while at the Respondent's residence.

14. During an interview with the Board investigator, the Respondent admitted that he had an inappropriate relation with Client A that included sexual intercourse and

illegal drug use. The Respondent was interviewed by Board investigator on January 17, 2013.

15. The Respondent also admitted that he knew that Client A suffered from a heroin addiction and had been taking Suboxone, a drug used to treat addiction issues.

16. The Respondent's conduct, as described above, constitutes, in whole or in part, violations of Code of Md. Regs tit. 10, § 58.03.03 (A (1) and (2)); Code of Md. Regs tit. 10, § 58.03. 04. A (11) and (14) and B (3); Code of Md. Regs tit. 10, § 58.03. 05. A (2) (a) and (d) and B (1) (a); and Code of Md. Regs tit. 10, § 58.03. 09 C (1) and (2).

ORDER

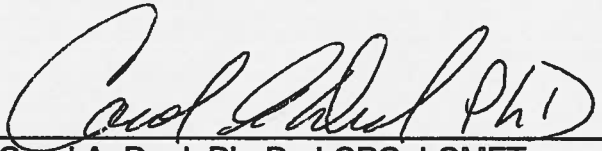
Based on the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, it is this 19th day of September 2014, by a majority of the quorum of the Board, hereby

ORDERED that the Respondent's AD trainee status, is hereby **RESCINDED** and the Board will not accept, from the Respondent, any future application for licensure, certification, and/or registration; and it is further

ORDERED that for purposes of public disclosure and as permitted by Md. State Govt. Code Ann. §§ 10-601 *et seq.* (2009 Repl. Vol.), this document consists of the contents of the foregoing Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order, and is reportable to any entity to whom the Board is obligated to report; and it is further

ORDERED that this Order is final and a public document pursuant to Md. State
Govt. Code Ann. §§ 10-601 *et seq.* (2009 Repl. Vol.).

10-10-2014
Date


Carol A. Deel, Ph. D., LCPC, LCMFT,
Board Chair
Maryland Board of Professional Counselors
and Therapists